

# Legislative Report on Civic Engagement in Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Development



## Legislative Charge

The statutory requirement for this report is found in the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Funding Bill (House File 1231, Session Law Chapter 172). Article 2, Section 4, paragraph (l) states: "\$100,000 the first year and \$150,000 the second year are for civic engagement in TMDL development. The Agency shall develop a plan for expenditures under this paragraph. The agency shall give consideration to civic engagement proposals from basin or sub-basin organizations, including the Mississippi Headwaters Board, the Minnesota River Joint Powers Board, Area II Minnesota River Basin Projects, and the Red River Basin Commission. By November 15, 2009, the plan shall be submitted to the house and senate chairs and ranking minority members of the environmental finance divisions."

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## Executive Summary

In passing and signing the Clean Water Legacy Act, the Minnesota Legislature and the Governor of Minnesota charged the Clean Water Council with the task of developing strategies for informing, educating, and encouraging the participation of citizens, stakeholders, and others regarding the identification of impaired waters, development of TMDLs, development of TMDL implementation plans, and implementation of restoration activities for impaired waters.

In response to this charge, the Clean Water Council developed a vision for civic engagement that has provided the inspiration and foundation for the development of new tools and ideas for engaging citizens and stakeholders in TMDL studies. Informed by the Clean Water Council recommendations, the MPCA has taken the initial steps to create several new civic engagement resources for local governments developing TMDL studies. These tools include a new, interactive, multi-media toolbox that will be made available to local government officials and other project sponsors developing TMDL studies for impaired waters. The MPCA will provide assistance and training to those officials using this tool for the first time.

MPCA's interactive planning tool will be a comprehensive toolbox of civic engagement resources including:

- 1) Tools for assessing the capacity of each community for civic engagement.
- 2) Guidance and procedures for encouraging civic engagement throughout the TMDL study development process (Attachment 1).
- 3) Applicable and important academic research materials regarding what is effective in engaging citizens and changing their behaviors.
- 4) Creative new ideas and practices to encourage local water stewardship.
- 5) Narratives and civic engagement success stories gathered from around Minnesota and the globe.

These resources will be organized to provide a logical framework for planning and organizing civic engagement activities. Using this tool, a local project sponsor could develop a civic engagement plan that is tailor-made for the specific community's needs, programs, resources, and circumstances (Attachment 2). The MPCA's civic engagement planning tool will be interactive as well as instructional. Importantly, it will also allow local projects to document and share stories and successes with other citizens and stakeholders statewide.

The planning tool will prompt each TMDL Project Manager to evaluate and document the successes and lessons learned from civic engagement activities. By utilizing the same evaluation tools statewide, the MPCA will be better able to aggregate evaluation statistics from all projects and determine whether civic engagement goals are being met within the 81 watersheds in Minnesota.

The MPCA's vision is to introduce and employ this new, multi-media planning tool in a methodical manner by integrating it within the agency's watershed approach. It is anticipated that MPCA could introduce this tool within approximately six to eight major watersheds each year, ultimately covering all 81 watersheds within ten years (Attachment 3). The planning tool will be flexible enough to take basin/sub-basin issues and needs into consideration.

As this interactive planning tool is rolled out, continual improvements will be made to increase its scope, usefulness and effectiveness. In order to ensure the deployment of the civic engagement planning tool, the MPCA has reassigned an existing staff person (one full-time equivalent [FTE]) to oversee development and introduction of this tool. Funds appropriated by the legislature for civic engagement will be used for this purpose.

## **Background**

It is widely acknowledged that government alone cannot address the widespread water pollution problems known to exist in Minnesota. The State's success in addressing these problems will depend, in large measure, upon the active involvement of the partners in this effort – the citizens of Minnesota. Actively and genuinely involving citizens and stakeholders in watershed planning and implementation activities is a fundamentally important goal in order to find long-term solutions to these environmental challenges.

Many of Minnesota's local government agencies have made a concerted effort to engage stakeholders (those individuals, organizations, agencies, or other parties that have an interest or "stake" in the condition of a particular water body), but have typically focused less on engaging average citizens/residents within a particular watershed. While relationships with stakeholders have proven fruitful, it has become clear that new strategies are needed to engage watershed residents in protecting water quality.

The goal of civic engagement is to encourage watershed residents to take greater responsibility for owning and solving water quality problems and actively and actively participating in watershed planning processes alongside government experts. This means providing citizens with more and better opportunities to engage in watershed planning processes and encouraging them to take greater responsibility for their own actions that negatively impact water resources.

## **Moving from a "Consultative" Model of Governance to Greater Citizen Empowerment**

The MPCA and its state water quality partner agencies (Board of Water and Soil Resources, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Health, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources) will be asked to simultaneously provide the proper amount of autonomy, direction, and support to both the local governments that work directly with citizens, and to the citizens who will lead change. To provide direction and support, the MPCA has recently developed new guidelines and tools for encouraging civic engagement in TMDLs studies. The goal of these guidelines is to ensure that civic engagement activities become routinely integrated into all TMDL studies and that adequate funding for their implementation follows.

The MPCA's civic engagement guidelines encourage state and local government agencies to do more to empower watershed residents during development of TMDL studies, from beginning to end. This means actively recruiting citizens to serve as advisors in the planning process, seeing them as equals to technical experts, and appreciating them for the life experiences and the indigenous knowledge they bring to the table. When citizens, experts, and stakeholders are equally respected in the planning process, fresh insights and constructive changes are more likely to emerge. An important part of this vision is to ensure that expert facilitators are available to communities so that difficult planning discussions and problem-solving sessions occur in a safe, constructive, and productive manner.

## **From Planning to Implementation – Seeking a More Substantive Role for Citizens in Watershed Restoration**

As a result of the Clean Water Council's research, it has been determined that small-scale, targeted efforts are most effective when engaging citizens. Rather than spreading efforts thinly over large areas of the state, targeted planning and implementation efforts will begin more substantially within critical areas of watersheds (those portions of watersheds that are contributing the highest proportion of pollutants).

Within these targeted areas, realistic expectations must be set for citizen participation – during all phases of TMDL development, including the study, the development of watershed restoration and protection strategies and the implementation phase of these projects. Some of the most effective methods of engaging land owners have been employed in citizen-led watershed projects, where modest cash incentives and peer pressure were

used to encourage implementation of land use practices that improve water quality. These projects have resulted in a landowner participation rate of 60-70 percent, a level seldom experienced in most watershed projects. Although this level of participation may prove to be a challenging goal to meet consistently, it offers the most promising model to date for encouraging changes in individual behaviors that could improve water quality. This model of citizen leadership is one that local governments will be encouraged to use during development of TMDLs and watershed plans and execution of those plans.

## **The Process Used to Develop New Guidelines and Tools for Civic Engagement in Development of TMDLs**

In March 2009, MPCA convened a team of diverse professionals, including external stakeholders, to develop new guidelines for improving civic engagement in TMDL studies. The result of the team's work was a checklist of tools for involving the public in each of the major stages of a TMDL study, from beginning to end. The intention of the team was to outline *what* must be done to encourage citizen involvement without dictating *how* it should be accomplished. The actual methods used to bring the public more fully into watershed planning activities can take many forms, and there is room for creativity in deciding how they should be accomplished in a given watershed.

During development of these guidelines, MPCA staff informally and formally requested input and feedback from BWSR and a subset of the local government officials that would be largely responsible for implementing them. Focus groups were conducted and comments received on the proposed tools. In general, focus group participants stated that the checklist of tools was a good starting point; however, several local government officials articulated that they would like greater flexibility in applying them. They also wanted more recognition for the work already accomplished in their communities. In response to the focus group comments that were received, MPCA altered its approach and has sought ways to be more flexible and responsive to local conditions and needs.

## **The Next Steps**

Because there are significant differences statewide in the readiness of local sponsors to engage citizens in watershed work, development of a "one-size-fits-all" approach to civic engagement does not make sense. Consequently, MPCA determined that it should create a flexible planning tool and idea bank that could be applied or adjusted to suit the needs of a particular community.

Making use of the latest technological advances, MPCA is creating a multi-media tool that has the ability to store large amounts of research and information, video clips, personal narratives, guidance materials and other planning tools. All of these materials will be accessible on demand so that a community could pick and choose the tools that make the most sense for their particular needs. The tools and resources are intended to be utilized from the earliest planning stages of a watershed planning process through implementation. However, a community can access these tools, no matter where they are in the TMDL development process. Because the tool is flexible and developed by the community rather than the MPCA, the resulting plan is more likely to be used and its implementation more likely to be sustained over time. Once a project sponsor develops a plan to suit their own specific needs, a work plan would be developed and the activities funded and supported through MPCA TMDL development funds that are passed through to local governments.

The ultimate goal of the civic engagement vision and tools is to build a strong foundation from which to encourage local ownership of both water quality problems and solutions. Research indicates that this approach is more likely to result in real behavior change in the watershed community in support of water quality improvements. MPCA staff believe that there are hundreds of citizens across Minnesota who are willing and able to lead their communities and neighbors in change and in a more effective and sustainable manner than could be accomplished by agency staff alone.

Creating opportunities for true civic engagement and citizen empowerment will require a shift in the methodologies currently used in government organizations around the state. In order to move toward the new vision, a concerted effort will need to be made to continue and to broaden the dialogue about this new vision and planning tool.

Therefore, the appropriation provided by the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Funding Bill will be used to fund a staff position (one FTE) within MPCA, to be reassigned to complete this civic engagement work, to include:

- Further development of a civic engagement community assessment and interactive planning tool for local practitioners that would be used by local governments to develop civic engagement strategies that reflect their own local needs and conditions;
- The rollout and integration of the new civic engagement tool in TMDLs, in accordance with the MPCA watershed approach, reaching 6-8 watersheds a year (ultimately reaching all 81 watersheds);
- Documentation and sharing of success stories;
- Encouragement and support for local project sponsors to facilitate adoption of tools and practices;
- Coordination among agencies to eliminate redundancy and establish BMPs during the development of TMDL studies.

### Civic Engagement in the Development of TMDL Studies

*“Public participation in the development, revision, and enforcement of any regulation, standard, effluent limitation, strategy, or program established by the Administrator or any State under this Act shall be provided for, encouraged, and assisted by the Administrator and the States.”*

*– Federal Clean Water Act, 1972*

*Minnesotans take responsibility to protect our environment:*

- *Minnesotans act on their environmental knowledge to support healthy ecosystems.*
- *The MPCA leads the way to minimize its environmental footprint and assist other public entities to do the same.*

*– MPCA Strategic Plan, 2008*

### Introduction

Over the past two years, the Clean Water Council has spent considerable effort studying the most effective methods for engaging citizens and stakeholders in the development of watershed restoration/protection strategies and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies. Following on that work, a small team of MPCA staff and external stakeholders was convened to draft new guidelines for local officials involved in developing watershed restoration strategies and TMDL studies. These guidelines are intended to expand and improve civic engagement practices in watershed projects in Minnesota. By creating these new guidelines, it is hoped that a high standard for public collaboration is consistently implemented in all watershed projects statewide, no matter their location or complexity.

Rather than develop a detailed guidance manual prescribing how the public should be engaged, the team developed a relatively simple “checklist” that outlines new expectations for all TMDL projects. The intention of the team was to outline *what* must be done without dictating *how* it should be accomplished. The actual methods used to bring the public more fully into watershed planning activities can take many forms, and there is room for creativity in deciding how they should be accomplished in a given watershed.

The ultimate goal of these guidelines is to increase the transparency of and access to government decision-making, to bring citizens and government officials together in a more equal relationship and to create a sense of shared responsibility and community accountability for watershed health.

A ground principle has been that watershed management can no longer be seen solely as the government’s responsibility. The public has a critical role to play and, as such, government agencies must develop the collaborative structures and democratic processes needed to engage the public as true partners and co-leaders in this important work.

These guidelines represent several months of exploration and deliberation, consolidating many views of what a civic engagement model should look like in our state. This document sets the stage for the development of increasingly more effective public involvement strategies and processes in Minnesota’s watershed management programs. To make these initial guidelines reality, adequate funding, resources and other support must necessarily follow.

This initiative builds on the work of the Clean Water Council and the many public participation efforts already underway in water departments and agencies across the state. Such efforts have also been centered on the premise that protecting, enhancing and restoring Minnesota’s waters necessarily requires the engagement of ordinary Minnesotans as partners in the every-day work of government.

## The public nature of water

Of all the natural resources charged to our care, water is one of the most complex, the most imbued with multiple meanings and the most contested. With more than ten percent of our land area covered by lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands, water is much more than a natural resource to be managed; it is a collectively held societal good that no one can truly own and which requires stewardship by all. Healthy watersheds are central to our food and energy production, commodities transport, municipal drinking water, waste removal, recreational and cultural activities, and ecosystem support. Our way of life and identity as Minnesotans depend on the responsible use and collective care of this valuable common resource.

Watershed management has evolved over many years. During that time, a tension has existed between developing the science and technology needed to develop reliable solutions and a recognition that civic engagement provides the key to long-term success in improving and protecting water quality. This tension has been treated as a paradox, resulting in policy makers and managers often choosing between the two. Arguably, a new approach must be taken – one that creatively manages this tension and recognizes the critical role of each in accomplishing our goals.

The recent shift to developing watershed-based water quality restoration/protection strategies requires a more effective watershed-based form of civic engagement at the core of each watershed restoration project. Civic engagement is the means to effect the social change required to restore and sustain water quality over the long-term.

## Why focus on civic engagement?

### Minnesotan's role—getting more of us to the table

Recruiting a broader base of citizens to participate in water management activities has proved challenging for many of our water management agencies in recent years. Some water management professionals have been heard to say “people don’t care,” or “we don’t have the time or staff to do this!” These statements are understandable given there is generally poor turnout at public hearings and that there have been limited dollars available to focus on more than technical expertise. But a recent study of Minnesota’s public involvement processes has revealed that many citizens do in fact have an interest in public policy issues and that they are capable of understanding complex dilemmas. Surveys of Minnesotans have revealed that for many, it *is the participation process, not citizen apathy* that is the real problem. Many feel the role provided to them is too limited to be meaningful, that decision-making procedures are not clear or are closed, and that most participation avenues allow for little involvement in decision-making.

### Civic engagement is different from consultation

When addressing complex water problems, such as nonpoint sources of pollution, “consulting” with the public is no longer enough. Civic engagement requires a different orientation – where the government’s job is to help Minnesotans do *their* job. Since watershed management must be the responsibility of both government *and* the public, civic engagement must be taken more seriously.

### How does civic engagement help Minnesotans take responsibility?

At its best, civic engagement provides the following:

- Conversation - Government, as convener, provides a social space where diverse stakeholders can meet as equals to engage in deliberative dialogue. The quality of the conversation in civic engagement is very important. Stakeholders are not there to debate with each other, to try and persuade the others

to support one view over another. Deliberation means each view is legitimate as long as it is grounded in personal or real world experience. New and useful information is revealed and shared often by those closest to the problems, sometimes referred to as indigenous knowledge.

- Collaboration - collaborative watershed management requires social structures within a community that allow relationships of mutual respect and trust to develop between previously disconnected neighbors, businesses, and local governments. When civic engagement is used in watershed projects, stakeholders themselves have the responsibility to develop a common community position and approach, rather than relying on government to make this determination for them. When community members lead their own water stewardship efforts, the potential for success is much stronger, the expectations they set for themselves may be higher, and their ability to hold one another accountable can become self-reinforcing.
- Community – civic engagement, at its core, is a means to building a common community vision and the collaborative relationships needed to achieve that vision. Inviting different stakeholders to the table, asking them to share with others how they use their waters, to connect the issue to their personal experience, using deliberation rather than debate, asking them to grapple with value conflicts and trade-offs, and ultimately to find a common position they can all support – these things are fundamental to helping the public transform their view of themselves.

## The MPCA's Mission

The mission of the MPCA is “*to work with Minnesotans*” to protect, conserve and improve our environment and enhance our quality of life. Civic engagement requires the MPCA, as well as its sister agencies to include the public in issues framing and reframing, problem-solving, solution development, decision-making, and implementation. A citizen who sees him/herself as having an investment in the success of a given process (because he/she has invested his time and energy into making it work) will fight harder to make sure that process is not derailed or thwarted by others seeking to force a given outcome. A citizen needs to “own” the process just as much as she/he needs to “own” the outcome. For this reason, it is important to develop tools that encourage this to happen to the greatest extent possible. The tools and process must be authentic – something to which they can connect their own personal experiences and feel committed.

### Civic engagement does not mean weakening government

Don Lenihan of the Public Policy Forum in Canada states it well: “Working together collaboratively to achieve a common goal need not involve any transfer of power from one organization, private, public or not-for-profit, to another. The approach taken here is that collaboration is about getting actors outside government to see themselves as a critical part of any viable strategy to achieve goals that they themselves hold dear..... So a collaborative partnership is not about giving away authority. **It is about exercising it differently.**”<sup>1</sup>

Through civic engagement, government is relieved of the burden to have all the answers, to solely own the process, to get bigger to solve the problem. Civic engagement means we seek to develop collaborative structures, provide direction and support and that allow the public the autonomy to work with each other, not just with government.

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<sup>1</sup> Lenihan, Don. 2009. Rethinking the Public Policy Process: A Public Engagement Framework. Public Policy Forum Canada: Ottawa, Ontario. <http://www.ppforum.com/crossing-boundaries-program>

## **An opportunity for the MPCA, other state agencies and local government to be national leaders**

In recent years, public engagement as a field of study has gained a great deal of attention among public administration scholars and public officials. This renewed interest may be the result of advances in communication technology that allow the general public to follow the work of government more closely. It could also be argued that our current economic crisis has raised the bar with respect to streamlining government and making it more effective and accountable to the public.

In Minnesota, we are at a critical juncture in our state's watershed management history. The passage of the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment supports the notion that Minnesotans value their natural environment and are willing to pay more to ensure its health. However, this also means that the public will have higher expectations of natural resource agencies and local governments. Our citizens are watching to see if public officials will break from business as usual and seize this opportunity to develop innovative approaches and practices to restore our impaired waters and protect and enhance those that are healthy, now and into the future.

Government at all levels has an opportunity to lead people in developing a new generation of public involvement processes and to demonstrate the benefits of authentic, meaningful public engagement in water resource management.

### **Guidelines for authentic, meaningful civic engagement**

The following civic engagement guidelines for TMDL studies is intended to guide our water management agencies to a more open approach to governance and to create more compelling reasons for citizens to participate. The steps and activities outlined here, while not definitive or yet complete, are a starting point. It is anticipated that with time and more experience, our sense of what these guidelines should be will change. In the short-term however, these guidelines will be tested as part of an interactive, multi-media planning tool being developed by the MPCA and which is intended to be used by local governments in designing their own civic engagement plans.

## **Guidelines for engaging citizens and stakeholders in the development of TMDL studies**

### **Definitions:**

**Advisory committee:** A collection of interested citizens, stakeholders, and technical experts brought together for the purposed of advising local government staff on policies, procedures and technical issues related to the development of watershed restoration and protections strategies and TMDLs.

**Citizens/residents:** All people living within affected watersheds.

**Civic engagement:** Individuals working to make a difference in the civic life of their communities by developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. Individuals help to promote the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political means. (Thomas Erhlich)

**Consultative approach:** The existing approach to most public participation activities – where government agencies ask citizens and stakeholders to provide comments on a product or process already developed by government agencies.

**Empowerment:** An approach to civic engagement whereby government simultaneously provides support, direction and autonomy to local partners working to manage water resources.

Local knowledge: The lifetime experience and knowledge gained by individuals simply by living, working and collaborating with fellow citizens living in the watershed.

Partners: Those parties or individuals who are directly responsible for planning and implementation of remediation activities, monitoring, etc. related to a specific TMDL study and whose participation is essential to the long-term success of a project. This group includes those that are permitted or otherwise directly impacted by the requirements of the TMDL study.

Stakeholder: An individual, organization, agency or other interested party which has an interest or “stake” in the condition of a particular resource.

Steering committee: A relatively small group convened to advise the project leader about all watershed planning activities, from beginning to end. The Steering Committee would consist of local Project Sponsors, MPCA Project Managers, MPCA basin planner, citizen(s), and several representatives of local government.

Watershed restoration/protection strategy: An inclusive, coordinated strategy created for each major watershed (Eight-digit Hydrologic Unit Code) in Minnesota (smaller geographic scale in the Twin Cities Metropolitan area). The strategy is intended to provide resource managers with a greater understanding of those factors and conditions that influence the storage and transport of water in a specific watershed, as well as how those processes are influenced by human activities and natural fluctuations. The strategy will coordinate state and local water programs to achieve efficiencies and effectiveness in the delivery of those programs.

## **Guidelines for engaging citizens and stakeholders in the development of TMDL studies**

### **Define leadership structure/approach**

- ☒ Discuss how leadership will be handled over the course of the project and sustained once the study is completed.
- ☒ Determine how a broader array of citizens will be involved or engaged in this process (to spread the message).

### **Pre-project planning:**

- ☒ Initiate development of the watershed strategy, ensuring that it includes strategies for engaging citizens throughout the process.
- ☒ Convene a Steering Team (TMDL Project Managers, technical staff, basin planners, citizen, local government staff) that will guide the overall watershed planning process.
- ☒ Assess the skill sets of the members of the Steering Team. Determine if additional expertise is needed (see attached list of needed skill sets).
- ☒ Define roles and responsibilities on paper for everyone involved, especially for stakeholders and citizens, emphasizing equality of citizens and scientists. Outline the project’s major decision points so stakeholders and citizens understand where they can influence the process.
- ☒ Conduct pre-project survey of stakeholders and citizens who will be involved in the watershed strategy development process to determine attitudes toward and knowledge of water quality problems and government planning activities.
- ☒ Assess civic engagement capacity of the watershed communities using tools provided by the MPCA.
- ☒ Conduct Advisory Committee member training to help members understand expectations, their roles and how to be most effective in those roles.

## Launching the project:

### Getting started

- ☒ Convene a diverse Advisory Committee (broader than the “usual suspects”), providing members with a document that describes how and when they can be involved in and influence the various stages of the watershed planning process (see MPCA Training Manual – Chapter 4 for more information about creating Advisory Committees).
- ☒ Review entire watershed planning process with Advisory Committee members to provide context for their work.
- ☒ Define constraints and boundaries (legal limitations, etc.) of the project. Articulate them to the Advisory Committee.
- ☒ Articulate those things that may change over the duration of the process, such as water quality standards, data, TMDLs for waterbodies within the watershed, etc.).
- ☒ Conduct facilitated group exercise with Advisory Committee to develop a vision for the watershed.
- ☒ Develop general goals for the watershed with members of the Advisory Committee (such as better swimming, fishing, improved water clarity, restored habitats, etc.).
- ☒ Develop a strategy for ensuring broader public input (beyond that provided by an Advisory Committee) with the help of the Advisory Committee.

### Collect existing data and define data gaps

- ☒ Contact MPCA Basin Coordinator and request information about the watershed: landscape, demographics, land use, water bodies, ground water aquifers, TMDL assessment and impaired waters listings.
- ☒ Review historical activities and local water plans and other relevant documents to determine how civic engagement activities should be coordinated.
- ☒ Provide opportunity for stakeholders and citizens to offer additional data, anecdotal information, indigenous knowledge, historical information, knowledge of potential pollution “hot spots” and other insights to help develop a more complete picture of the watershed and its condition.
- ☒ Identify information and data gaps.

### Review the MPCA’s water quality monitoring strategy for the watershed

- ☒ Briefly discuss the proposed monitoring strategy, including citizen water quality monitoring (where needed and feasible) and verify that it will fill data gaps at an affordable cost.
- ☒ Determine how citizen monitoring efforts fit into the overall monitoring strategy.
- ☒ Recruit citizens to conduct monitoring, if efforts are not already underway in the watershed.

### Analyze existing and new data

- ☒ Ask Advisory Committee members what they want to know about water quality in their watershed and about specific impaired reaches or lakes.
- ☒ Contact the MPCA about developing information materials (fact sheets, presentations, etc.) that communicate results of the data analysis clearly.
- ☒ Analyze, interpret and explain data (including data **collected by citizens**) in a simple manner the public can readily understand.
- ☒ Present results of monitoring activities at several community venues and on the web.
- ☒ Identify stressors and pollutant sources.

- ☒ Work with local partners and citizens to begin to discuss options for dividing the load allocation among sources of pollution.

### **Develop Total Maximum Daily Load allocation**

- ☒ Train Advisory Committee members about how a pollutant load allocation formula is developed and how they will be asked to participate in this process.
- ☒ Work with stakeholders to develop criteria against which to judge various allocation scenarios.
- ☒ Ask Citizens/Stakeholders if they want to discuss the mathematical approach to defining load allocation or what effect implementation of specific BMPs would have on water quality (less quantitative approach).
- ☒ Work with Advisory Committee to select from allocation scenarios based on selection criteria previously developed (examples: cost, equity, feasibility, etc.)
- ☒ Develop a communication strategy to explain why the specific allocation scenario has been selected.

### **Develop general implementation strategy for the impaired water**

- ☒ Gather ideas from Advisory Committee to incorporate into general implementation strategy for the TMDL document.
- ☒ Provide opportunity for Advisory Committee to review draft strategy before it is distributed for public comment.
- ☒ Verbally encourage citizens and stakeholders to remain engaged through the implementation phase of the process.

### **Place draft TMDL on Public Notice**

- ☒ Send preliminary TMDL to EPA for comments.
- ☒ Share Draft TMDL comments and responses with Advisory Committee.
- ☒ Share USEPA approval with Advisory Committee.
- ☒ Celebrate TMDL completion and recognize Committee accomplishments.
- ☒ Remind Committee of future opportunities to engage in implementation and final restoration.
- ☒ Administer post-project survey to evaluate the civic engagement process to identify opportunities for improvement and to document lessons learned (survey tool provided by the MPCA).

### **Complete TMDL implementation strategy within one year of TMDL approval**

- ☒ Involve Advisory Committee members in planning for completion of the Strategy Implementation Plan and development of the strategy as coordinated with local government partners.
- ☒ Document and assess existing authorities and financing that will allow for implementation to occur.

## Civic Engagement Skills Survey

### Questions for project managers and steering committee members

For each of the following skills, please rate your team's abilities. Your team's answers should inform your decisions about whether additional support or other resources are needed.

**Score each from 1 – 5 (1 = undeveloped, 3 = average, 5 = excellent)**

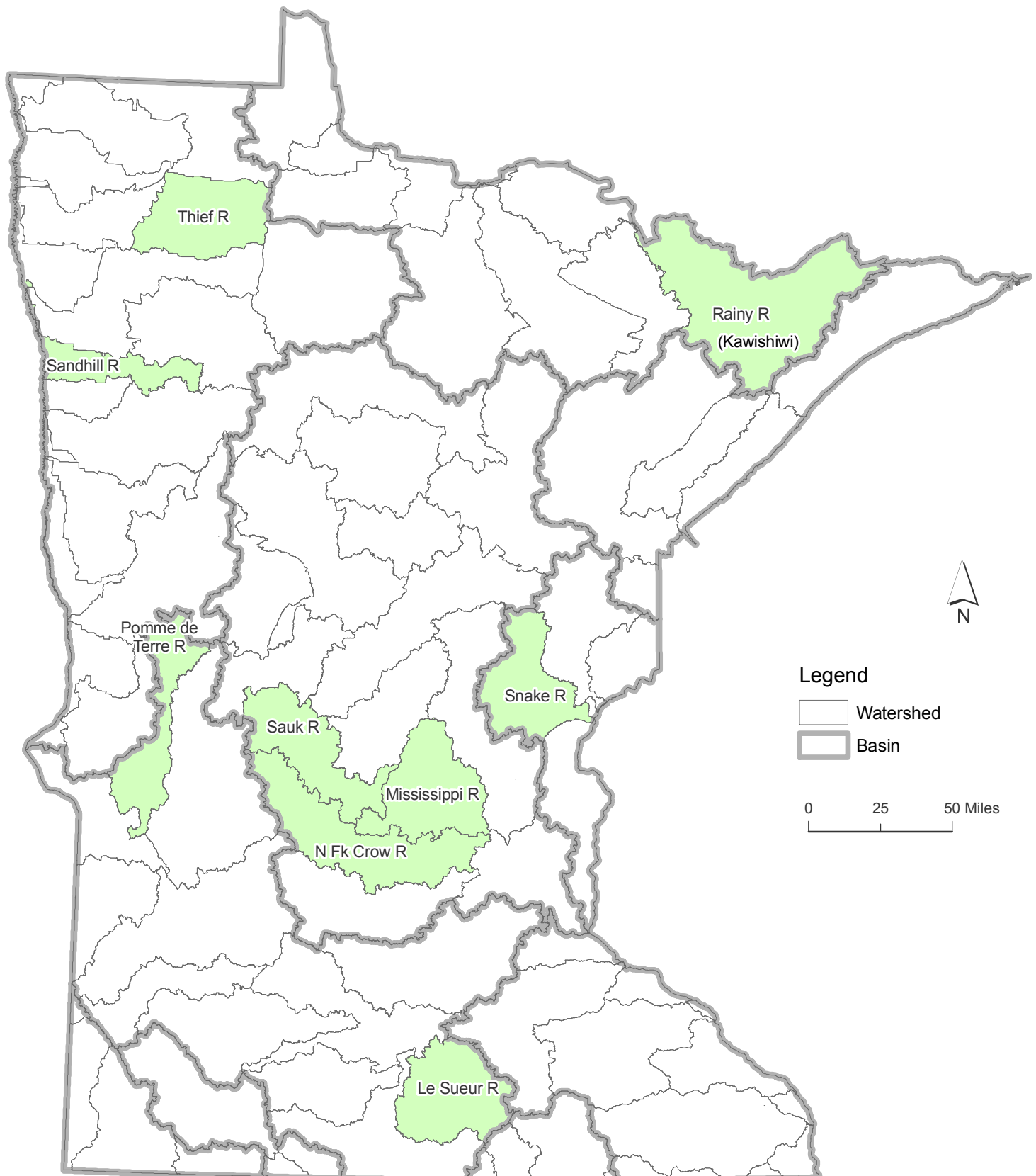
- € Understanding of civic engagement (citizens and government working together to reach shared outcomes and solutions)
- € Meeting design and facilitation
- € Public speaking and writing skills
- € Ability to create public presentations in simple, easy-to-understand language
- € Partnership-building and resource mobilization (from diverse funding sources)
- € Program evaluation ( determining success of BMPS, civic engagement and information and education programs)
- € Organizing and leading volunteers
- € Understanding of the interrelationships among federal, state and local agencies with authority for water quality
- € Community-based marketing techniques
- € Adaptive management
- € Available time to devote to this project (approximately two-four hour per week)

## Building civic engagement in watershed restoration and

protection projects - The MPCA and its partners will help guide communities through these steps to encourage public participation and build a sense of ownership in processes and decisions about water quality problems and solutions in their area.



# 2010 Clean Water Fund Watershed Approach Projects



November 2009

Minnesota Pollution  
Control Agency